Indo-Bangladesh relations

†938. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that relations with Bangladesh are not congenial;

(b) if so, wheher Government have taken any steps, so far, to improve relations with Bangladesh; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir. India & Bangladesh enjoy good neighbourly relations.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Expenditure on rent abroad

939. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news report captioned "8% of MEA Budget spent on rents abroad" which appeared in the 'Asian Age' dated the 20th May, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to address the problems highlighted in the report?

THE MINISTER OF SATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The following details of the total expenditure of the Ministry *vis-a-vis* the expenditure incurred on rents during the last three years indicate that actually the rentals abroad from about 6% of the total annual expenditure of the Ministry:—

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.